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TESTIMONY OF
ATTORNEY GENERAL RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
BEFORE THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS COMMITTEE
MARCH 17, 2010

I appreciate the opportunity to support House Bill 5366, An Act Concerning the Disqualification of State Contractors.

This legislation extends from 2 years to 5 years the maximum time for a state contractor to be disqualified from bidding on Department of Transportation and Department of Public Works contracts when the contractor has violated state contracting statutes and regulations.

Simply, this legislation provides the same maximum administrative penalty for contractors who violate contracting rules as currently in place for federal contracts and for Department of Administrative Services contracts. The proposal also deletes subsection (e) of section 4b-95 -- an outdated provision that has been superseded by other statutes that more clearly define the due process requirements for disqualifying a state contractor.

In cases involving deliberate and egregious violations of state contracting rules, a two year debarment period is simply a slap on the wrist. Especially for large companies, it is merely the cost of doing business. A five year debarment period provides significant and substantial deterrence. There is simply no reason to have a weaker maximum penalty for transportation and public works contracts than already exists for administrative services contracts, especially when transportation and public works contracts are typically larger. The maximum penalty should be sufficient to fit the severity of wrongdoing.

I urge the committee to favorably consider House Bill 5366.